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ABSTRACT

A survey designed to elicit information concerning graduate school enrollment was issued in two parts in the early fall of 1972 and in January 1973. This document presents the results of the first part of the survey. Tables present the number of respondents with usable data to each question, the percentage that number represents of the total group or subgroup, the total number of students reported as being enrolled for fall 1971 and fall 1972, and the percentage of change in enrollment from 1971 to 1972. All data are presented by public, private and total. In addition, data are presented for institutions classified in terms of the highest degree awarded. Finally, data are summarized by size of the responding graduate school. Size categories used include 0-100 students, 101-500 students, 501-1000 students, 1,001-5,000 students, and over 5,000 students. (HS)

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Graduate Record Examinations

Report on the Council of Graduate Schools-Graduate Record Examinations Board 1972-73 Survey of Graduate Enrollment

- Part I -

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Introduction

As a result of the difficulty of obtaining accurate information on graduate enrollments, and particularly trends in enrollments, the GRE Board and the Council of Graduate Schools jointly undertook last year the first in an annual series of surveys of enrollment of the membership of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States. The Council membership consists of some 303 graduate institutions who grant either the master's or doctorate as the highest degree. The members of the Council grant 98% of the earned doctorates and 85% of the master's degrees awarded.

Due to the early timing of last year's questionnaire, some institutions were unable to provide responses to all questions; accordingly, this year's survey was divided into two sections, the first of which was distributed in the early fall of 1972 with a request that results be returned no later than mid-November. Data were requested on enrollment as of mid-October for 1971 and 1972; even given the postponement of several questions until the second questionnaire mailing in January of 1973, a number of institutions were not able to report data on all questions asked or for both years.

It is anticipated that the results of the second questionnaire mailing will be available early in the spring of 1973, and that the survey will be repeated annually with whatever modification in procedure and questionnaire seems appropriate.

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Sample Description

Survey questionnaires were sent to 303 graduate schools who are members of CGS. A total of 277 questionnaires were returned or an amazing 91% response rate, an indication of the continued high interest among graduate schools in the topic of the survey. Since the primary purpose of the questionnaire was to develop comparative data between 1971 and 1972, responses to questions were included in the analysis only when data were supplied for both years. Thus, the effective response rate per question will vary from a high of 91% for the overall sample to a low of 77% for some more detailed question. While this is probably to be expected, the variability does reduce somewhat the value of some questions and makes comparisons across some questions of restricted value.

Extreme care should also be taken in attempting to compare results of this year's survey with published results of last year's survey insofar as 1971 data reported in the current survey differs significantly from 1971 data reported last year. There are several reasons for this difference, despite the almost identical number (276 in 1971 compared to 277 in 1972) of graduate institutions responding.

First, the definition of "graduate school" was changed between the two years. In 1971, institutions were asked to define graduate school as "those parts of the institution under the administrative control of the graduate dean." In 1972, institutions were asked to include "all students considered as registered in the graduate school" including "Education, Engineering, Social Work, Medical and Business Programs leading to MA/MS or Ph.D., Ed. D. or other doctorates." Second, many institutions noted that the data for 1971 which they were able to provide for this year's survey was different from, and better than, the 1971 data which they provided last year.

Finally, although the actual number of institutions responding remained almost constant, the specific institutions responding in 1972 were not always identical to those responding in 1971. It is hoped that a longitudinal study, by institution, can be accomplished at a later date which will provide comparable data across both institutions and survey years.

Despite these limitations, the overall obtained sample (i.e., those submitting usable questionnaires on time) appears to be very representative of the total CGS population. Below are comparisons of number and percentages of several ways of describing the available population and sample. It should be noted that "Master's Highest Degree" refers, throughout this report, only to those institutions for which the master's degree is, in fact, the highest degree awarded. Data for these institutions do not reflect master's degrees offered by institutions which also offer the doctorate.

Comparison of Usable Sample and Base Population

	CGS Institutions		Usable Survey Sample		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	% (sample of each population subgroup)
Public	191	63%	174	63%	91%
Private	112	37%	103	37%	92%
Public-Master's Highest Degree	48	16%	37	14%	77%
Private-Master's Highest Degree	31	10%	28	10%	90%
Public-Ph.D. Highest Degree	143	47%	137	49%	96%
Private-Ph.D. Highest Degree	81	27%	75	27%	93%
Master's Highest Degree	79	26%	65	24%	82%
Ph.D. Highest Degree	224	74%	212	76%	95%

It is readily apparent that the sample is highly representative of the total population, despite the slight underrepresentation of public-master's highest degree awarding institutions. Since the sample becomes less complete as the complexity of the questions or the difficulty of obtaining the data increases, number and percentages of total group and subgroup are given for each question in the data presentation.

Results

The results of the survey are displayed in Tables 1 through 7. The tables present the number of respondents with usable data to each question (i.e., data for both years and for all parts of the question), the percentage that number represents of the total group or of the subgroup, e.g., Public, the total number of students reported each year and the percentage change from 1971 to 1972. All data are presented by public, private and total. In addition, Tables 1-3 also present data for institutions classified by means of the Educational Directory, Part 3, in terms of the highest degree awarded. These categories are: Public-Master's Highest; Private-Master's Highest; Public-Doctorate Highest; and, Private-Doctorate Highest. This additional breakdown was not applied to later questions because it was not felt to be particularly important or because the differences were too small to affect the overall results.

Finally, data were summarized by size of the responding graduate school, although these summaries do not appear in Tables 1-7. Size categories used included 0-100 students, 101-500 students, 501-1,000 students, 1,001-5,000 students, and over 5,000 students, and were based upon the institution's response to Question 1 (Total Graduate School Enrollment). Results including these summaries are noted in the following discussion.

Discussion

A review of Table 1 shows a slight overall increase in total graduate school enrollment for the institutions reporting; 1.9% overall. However, when more than the total figures are reviewed, it becomes apparent that the increase is less marked for Ph.D. institutions than for master's institutions, and less marked for private institutions than for public institutions. For all Ph.D. institutions there is a 1.2% increase, an increase of 0.4% for private institutions and an increase of 1.5% for public institutions. For all master's institutions there is an increase of 6.0%, an increase of 2.6% for private institutions and an increase of 6.8% for public institutions.

Rates of increase differ not only for categories of institutions, but for institutions of differing size within categories. All sizes of private Ph.D. institutions (overall increase, 0.4%) showed increases in enrollment except those enrolling 501-1,000 students, where 11 institutions showed a decrease of 1.4%. Increases in enrollment in public Ph.D. institutions (overall increase, 1.5%) were markedly different by size, with 24 institutions enrolling fewer than 1,000 students showing an 8.7% decrease while 112 institutions enrolling more than 1,000 students showed a 1.7% increase. Public master's institutions (overall increase, 6.8%) showed consistent increases except for institutions enrolling more than 5,000 students, where a slight (2.2%) decrease was found. Private master's institutions (overall increase, 2.6%) showed 13 institutions enrolling fewer than 500 students with a 2.6% decrease and 15 institutions enrolling greater than 500 students with a 3.5% increase.

First-time enrollments show a similar pattern, with the overall increase (3.5%) being less marked for Ph.D. institutions than for master's institutions, and less marked for private institutions than for public institutions. For all Ph.D. institutions there is a 2.7% increase, an increase of 1.7% for private institutions and an increase of 3.1% for public institutions. Similarly, for all master's institutions there is an 8.2% increase, an increase of 7.9% for private institutions and an increase of 8.2% for public institutions.

Size differences appear to be reflected less in first-time enrollments than in total graduate school enrollment. All master's institutions, both public and private, showed first-time enrollment increases, regardless of size. Private Ph.D. institutions showed first-time enrollment increases for those institutions with total enrollment between 101 and 500 and for those between 1,001 and 5,000; institutions with total enrollment between 501 and 1,000 and over 5,000 showed slight decreases in first-time enrollment. Only in public Ph.D. institutions was a marked pattern apparent, with 7 institutions with total enrollment of less than 500 students showing a 25% decrease in first-time enrollment and 112 institutions with total enrollment of more than 500 students showing a 3.2% increase in first-time enrollment.

Number of assistantships held by graduate students increased in 1972, with increases being greater for Ph.D. institutions, as might be expected, and for private institutions, as might not. For all Ph.D. institutions, assistantships increased 2.5%, an increase of 4.9% for private institutions and 2.1% for public institutions. For all master's institutions, where the numbers of assistantships were much smaller, the overall increase was 0.6%, an increase of 3.0% for private institutions and 0.1% for public institutions.

Size differences are also apparent in number of assistantships. Both public and private Ph.D. institutions showed a consistent pattern, with institutions enrolling fewer than 500 total students showing a decrease in assistantships, while those enrolling more than 500 students showed an increase in assistantships. Public master's institutions showed a similar pattern, with institutions enrolling fewer than 1,000 total students showing a decrease in assistantships and institutions enrolling more than 1,000 students showing an increase in assistantships. The pattern for private master's institutions was mixed; the number of assistantships was up at institutions enrolling 0-100 students and over 500 students, and down at institutions enrolling between 100 and 500 students.

Fellowships showed a continuing decline in 1972, particularly at public institutions. There was an overall decrease of 8.4% among the institutions reporting. In the public institutions, the decrease was 12.2%, while in the private institutions it was 2.0%. Fellowships decreased in all size categories of public institutions and in all size categories of private institutions except those enrolling more than 5,000 students. The number of fellowships involved at master's institutions was too small to warrant separate treatment.

The number of degrees awarded continued to increase but at a somewhat slower pace for doctorates than for master's. Master's degrees were up 8.4% during 1972 and Ph.D. degrees up 5.9% for the same period. The public Ph.D. increase was somewhat higher (7.1%) than the private (3.1%). The percentage of increase for master's degrees was also greater for the public institutions (9.1%) than for private institutions (6.1%). Master's awarded increased in all size categories of both public and private institutions except private master's degree highest where 5 institutions enrolling under 100 students showed an 8.7% decrease. Award of Ph.D.'s increased in all size categories for both public and private Ph.D. institutions.

Table 7 indicates a breakdown of full- and part-time students for those institutions reporting. The table indicates that the percentage of full-time and part-time to total students is almost identical for 1971 and 1972 for institutions reporting.

Conclusion

The first section of the second CGS-GRE Board Survey of Graduate School Enrollment met with great success in terms of number of responses and, to a slightly lesser degree, in terms of response rate to individual questions. The representativeness of the sample and its overall completeness do lend validity to the results of the survey, which will not surprise many actively engaged in graduate education but may not support the assumptions of much of the general public.

One exception may arise from the attempt this year to review responses by size of responding institutions. Although this additional analysis tended to uncover patterns which might have been expected, it did reveal, for example, that enrollment growth appears to be markedly tied to institutional size with smaller institutions showing enrollment decreases in the face of continuing increases at larger institutions. And, while total enrollment, first-time enrollment, and degrees awarded continue to increase, financial support for graduate education, particularly as reflected in the number of available fellowships, continued to decline.

It seems important that information of this type continue to be collected, and that current efforts to make it more complete and detailed by dividing this survey into two parts have had a positive effect. If the second section of the survey receives the same response as has its predecessor, the survey should serve as a valuable addition to the total pool of information about graduate education.

November 22, 1972

TABLE 1

Total Graduate School* Enrollment by Type of Institution

	Number	%**	1971	1972	% Change
Public - Master's Highest	37	77%	75,779	80,921	6.8% increase
Private - Master's Highest	28	90%	16,385	16,812	2.6% increase
Public - Ph.D. Highest	136	95%	397,413	403,306	1.5% increase
Private - Ph.D. Highest	74	91%	135,202	135,726	0.4% increase
Master's Highest	65	82%	92,164	97,733	6.0% increase
Ph.D. Highest	210	94%	532,615	539,032	1.2% increase
Public - Master's and Ph.D.	173	91%	473,192	484,227	2.3% increase
Private - Master's and Ph.D.	102	91%	151,587	152,538	0.6% increase
Total	275	91%	624,779	636,765	1.9% increase

*For purposes of this survey, institutions were asked to include all students considered as registered in the graduate school, including Education, Engineering, Social Work, Medical and Business Programs leading to MA/MS or Ph.D., Ed.D. or other doctorates.

**Percentage figures are percent of the number responding of the number available in the total group. For example, 37 Public Master's Highest Degree institutions responded out of a possible 48 such institutions in the CGS membership for a 77% response rate for that group of institutions.

TABLE 2

First Time Graduate Enrollment by Type of Institution

	Number	%	1971	1972	% Change
Public - Master's Highest	27	56%	14,669	15,876	8.2% increase
Private - Master's Highest	24	77%	3,756	4,054	7.9% increase
Public - Ph.D. Highest	119	83%	89,372	92,137	3.1% increase
Private - Ph.D. Highest	62	76%	30,286	30,789	1.7% increase
Master's Highest	51	65%	18,425	19,930	8.2% increase
Ph.D. Highest	181	81%	119,658	122,926	2.7% increase
Public - Master's and Ph.D.	146	76%	104,041	108,013	3.8% increase
Private - Master's and Ph.D.	86	77%	34,042	34,843	2.4% increase
Total	232	77%	138,083	142,856	3.5% increase

TABLE 3

Number of Graduate Assistants (Service Required)

	Number	%	1971	1972	% Change
Public - Master's Highest	35	73%	3,210	3,214	0.1% increase
Private - Master's Highest	26	84%	558	575	3.0% increase
Public - Ph.D. Highest	126	88%	85,900	87,681	2.1% increase
Private - Ph.D. Highest	65	80%	16,744	17,557	4.9% increase
Master's Highest	61	77%	3,768	3,789	0.6% increase
Ph.D. Highest	191	85%	102,644	105,238	2.5% increase
Public - Master's and Ph.D.	161	84%	89,110	90,895	2.0% increase
Private - Master's and Ph.D.	91	81%	17,302	18,132	4.8% increase
Total	252	83%	106,412	109,027	2.5% increase

TABLE 4

Number of Graduate Fellows (Non-service Required)

	Number	%	1971	1972	% Change
Public - Master's and Ph.D.	146	76%	32,460	28,504	12.2% decrease
Private - Master's and Ph.D.	86	77%	19,155	18,765	2.0% decrease
Total	232	77%	51,615	47,270	8.4% decrease

TABLE 5

Number of Master's Degrees

	Number	%	1970-71	1971-72	% Change
Public	171	90%	110,910	120,987	9.1% increase
Private	101	90%	36,124	38,337	6.1% increase
Total	272	90%	147,034	159,324	8.4% increase

TABLE 6

Number of Ph.D. Degrees

	Number	%	1970-71	1971-72	% Change
Public	136	95%	19,945	21,366	7.1% increase
Private	74	91%	8,754	9,028	3.1% increase
Total	210	94%	28,699	30,394	5.9% increase

TABLE 7

Full-time - Part-time* Total Enrollment

	1971						1972			
	Number	%	Full-time Number	%	Part-time Number	%	Full-time Number	%	Part-time Number	%
Public	155	81%	198,240	48%	212,013	52%	199,900	48%	218,708	52%
Private	95	85%	61,598	50%	60,708	50%	60,400	49%	63,943	51%
Total	250	83%	259,838	49%	272,721	51%	260,300	48%	282,651	52%

*Institutions were directed to apply their own institutional definitions to "part-time" and "full-time."